



BUFFALOBERRY PATCH

BY GREG FREEMAN, DEPARTMENT NEWS EDITOR



CRAIG BIHRLE

Record Number of Bald Eagles Counted

A mild winter is probably the reason a record number of birds were counted during the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's 2006 mid-winter bald eagle survey.

In early January, 75 bald eagles – 64 adults and 11 juveniles, and two golden eagles – were spotted along the Missouri River in central North Dakota, according to Patrick T. Isakson, Department nongame biologist. Twenty-seven birds were observed in 2005.

"This year's total surpasses the previous high of 59 set in 1992," Isakson said, while noting the survey has been conducted each year since 1986.

The number of bald eagles wintering in the state depends on the amount of open water and availability of prey. "The mild winter kept the waterfowl numbers high in the state," Isakson said, "and when waterfowl are plentiful, so are eagles."

The Game and Fish Department participates in an annual nationwide mid-winter survey to determine the number of bald eagles in each state. The survey is flown at a low altitude from Bismarck to the Garrison Dam, with an observer counting both adult and immature bald and golden eagles.

Eagles are relatively easy to spot as they prefer to perch in large cottonwood trees along the river, and feed on fish and waterfowl. Adult bald eagles have a white head and tail and a dark brown body, while immature bald eagles are brown with irregular white plumage. Golden eagles have a gold cap on their head.

Bald eagles are unique to North America. Once an endangered species, bald eagles were reclassified as threatened in 1995 because of successful recovery efforts.

Boating Basics for Youngsters

Youngsters ages 12-15 wanting to operate a boat or personal watercraft with at least a 10 horsepower motor must first pass the state's Boating Basics Course. The course is free and available for home-study from the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's Bismarck office, or in a classroom setting held periodically around the state, according to Nancy Boldt, Game and Fish boat and water safety coordinator.

The Boating Basics Course isn't just for kids. Major insurance companies give adult boat owners who pass the course a premium discount on boat insurance.

The course covers legal requirements, navigation rules, getting underway, accidents and special topics such as weather, rules of the road, laws, life saving and first aid.

For more information on Boating Basics write to Nancy Boldt, North Dakota Game and Fish Department, 100 N. Bismarck Expressway, Bismarck, ND 58501-5095; or call 328-6300.

Dancing Ground Blinds to Open

Several national wildlife refuges and a state wildlife management area will offer sharp-tailed grouse observation blinds for public use this spring. The blinds are popular with wildlife photographers and others interested in watching the spring courtship rituals of sharp-tailed grouse.

Grouse blinds typically receive widespread interest and are available by reservation only. Those locations offering blinds usually start taking reservations for late March or early April, weather permitting. Peak grouse dancing activity usually occurs from mid- to late April or early May.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department has an observation blind at Lonetree Wildlife Management Area southwest of Harvey. Reservations can be made by calling 324-2211. One blind is available.

Contact the following national wildlife refuges for information on blind reservations:

- Lostwood National Wildlife Refuge, Kenmare, 848-2722.
- Des Lacs National Wildlife Refuge, Kenmare, 385-4046.
- Long Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Moffit, 387-4397.
- Arrowwood National Wildlife Refuge, Pingree, 285-3341.
- Upper Souris National Wildlife Refuge, Berthold, 468-5467.
- J. Clark Salyer National Wildlife Refuge, Upham, 768-2548.

NEW FISHING, FURBEARER LICENSES NEEDED

Hunters, trappers and anglers are reminded that new fishing and furbearer licenses are required April 1. The dates for the furbearer license coincide with fishing season.

The 2006-07 licenses are effective April 1 to March 31, 2007.

Hunter Education Volunteers Recognized

Volunteer instructors for North Dakota's hunter education program were recognized in February for their contributions of teaching students the importance of hunter safety and ethics, reports Jim Carter, North Dakota Game and Fish Department hunter education supervisor.

Years of service and instructor of the year awards were presented to volunteers at the annual hunter education workshop and awards banquet held in Bismarck. The instructor of the year award is based on years of service, classes taught, in-service training and involvement in the community with firearms safety.

Todd Foss from Fargo, Joe Solseng from Grand Forks, and Crosby instructors Toby Placek, Lauren Throntveit and Errol Thvedt were named instructors of the year.

Volunteer hunter education instructors recognized for 10 or more years are:

30 years – James Linnertz, West Fargo.

25 years – Allen Aufforth, Bottineau; Dale Bakkum, Mayville; Ronald Brilz, Tioga; James Buchweitz, Bottineau; Ronald Grinde, Mayville; James Grubb, Tioga; Robert Herdt, St. John; Doyle Heupel, Elgin; Dale Kilwein, Dickinson; Allan Kville, Portland; Roy Laframboise, Towner; Ellary Liebelt, Lidgerwood; Thomas Linnertz, Harwood; Charles Paulson, Fargo; Ralph Peterson, Portland; Toby Placek, Crosby; Melvin Stark, Cavalier; Arlo Stevick, Minot; Walter Turbiville, Dickinson; Daryl Vance, Watford City.

20 years – Melvin Birkholz, Garrison; David Colby, Kenmare; Bruce Fairbrother, Towner; Allen Giese, Wahpeton; Allan Goerger, Barney; Dwight Leier, Esmond; Gary Leslie, Burlington; Dwight Lies, Douglas; Gary Nilsson, Walhalla; Vernon Ostby, Garrison; Larrett Peterson, Bottineau; Larry Sinner, Hillsboro; Paul Stave, Grafton; Mark Walsh, Williston; Terry Week, Beach; Walter Zimbelman, Fullerton; James Zimmerman, Ellendale.

15 years – James Anderson, Dickinson; Ronald Bachmeier, Dickinson; Dwain Barondeau, Mott; Robert Blatherwick, Bottineau; Mike Cruft, Minot; Neil Dockter, Horace; Thomas Kelsh, Minot; Gene Kouba, Bismarck; Cory Lohse, Watford City; Robert Opp, Jamestown; Eugene Pederson, Valley



Todd Foss, (left), Fargo, receives instructor of the year award from Game and Fish Director Terry Steinwand.



Joe Solseng, (left), Grand Forks, receives instructor of the year award from Game and Fish Director Terry Steinwand.



Jim Linnertz, West Fargo, 30-year hunter education volunteer.



Above: Hunter education 25 years of service award recipients. Front row, from left: Doyle Heupel, Elgin; Walter Turbiville, South Heart; Ron Grinde, Mayville; Dale Bakkum, Mayville; Ralph Peterson, Portland; Roy Laframboise, Towner; Al Aufforth, Bottineau; and Jim Buchweitz, Bottineau. Back row, from left: Toby Placek, Crosby; Bob Herdt, St. John; Chuck Paulson, Fargo; Daryl Vance, Watford City; Game and Fish Director Terry Steinwand, Jim Grubb, Tioga; Al Kville, Portland; Tom Linnertz, Harwood; Mel Stark, Cavalier; and Dale Kilwein, Dickinson.



Left: Instructors of the year, from left: Lauren Throntveit, Crosby; Errol Thvedt, Fortuna; Game and Fish Director Terry Steinwand, and Toby Placek, Crosby.

City; Mark Pollert, LaMoure; Gerald Quintus, Richardton; Richard Sauer, Carpio; Paul Sinner, Wahpeton; Larry Thompson, Dickinson; Gary Wald, Maddock; Merle Weatherly, Jamestown; Curtis Wittmayer, Parshall.

10 years – Wayne Andersen, Bismarck; Darren Benneweis, Enderlin; William Byram, Devils Lake; Roger Dienert, Hankinson; Marty Egeland, Grand Forks; Gary Erickson,

Upham; Glen Fuhrman, Enderlin; Darrell Hager, Sheyenne; Rick Halderson, Enderlin; Robert Herding, Hankinson; Marvin Ingman, Dickinson; Mary Beth Ingman, Dickinson; Jackie Jacobson, Max; Ike Kuntz, Dickinson; Larry Leier, Hague; Pam Podoll, Velva; Edwin Rettig, Alexander; Harold Schnell, Dickinson; Thomas Simmons, Cavalier; Mark Volk, Bismarck.

Conservation Education Volunteers Recognized

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department annually recognizes the efforts of many volunteers who make the agency's conservation education projects successful. The following instructor/educator of the year awards were announced at the volunteer banquet in January.

Deb and Kevin Burley, a husband and wife team from Jamestown with five years of volunteer service, were named Conservation Educators of the Year. "Deb and Kevin have been active in all of our education projects," said Jeff Long, Game and Fish Department education coordinator. "They volunteer for our major projects like Hooked on Fishing and Boat and Water Safety, yet still find time for some of our lesser-known projects, including Birds of North Dakota and Wildlife of North Dakota. They are very deserving of this award."

Jack Messmer, a seven-year fishing instructor from Dickinson, was recognized as Hooked on Fishing Instructor of the Year for his commitment and dedication to the program. "Jack is always willing to participate and instruct at kids' fishing and aquatic education events," Long said. "His dedication shows by his hours of volunteer service, the number of events he has conducted, and the number of kids he has reached."

Wayne Beyer, a 15-year volunteer instructor from Wahpeton, was named Boating and Water Safety Instructor of the Year. "Wayne has delivered boat and water safety programs to thousands of participants," said Nancy Boldt, Department boat and water



Game and Fish Director Terry Steinwand (center) with Conservation Educators of the Year Deb and Kevin Burley, both Jamestown.



Wayne Beyer, Wahpeton, Boating and Water Safety Instructor of the Year.

safety coordinator. "He has been more than willing to teach the importance of boat and water safety, and has been a dedicated volunteer for a number of years."

In addition, volunteers recognized for 10 or more years were:

20 years – Stanley Griffin, Oberon; Sherry Niesar, Bismarck.

15 years – Wayne Beyer, Wahpeton; Carolyn Brauner, Jamestown; Bruce Messmer, Dickinson; Mark Montgomery, Center; Karen Wardner, Bismarck.

10 years – Linda Renner, Jamestown; Duane Schatz, Elgin; Darold Walls, Jamestown.

INSTANT LICENSING

Online at gf.nd.gov or by phone
800-406-6409

Most types of Game and Fish licenses and applications are now available both online at the Department's website, or over the phone. Online license purchases have no surcharge, while instant licensing over the phone carries a service charge of \$4 for transactions of \$70 or less, and \$10 if the cost is more than \$70.

NORTH DAKOTA
OUTDOORS
Live!

*With Radio Host Doug Leier,
Game and Fish Outreach Biologist*
Saturdays – 11 a.m. (10 a.m. mountain time)

on the following ND Clear Channel radio network stations:
 •KFGO-AM 790, Fargo •KKXL-AM 1440, Grand Forks
 •KCJB-AM 910, Minot
 •KLTC-AM 1460, Dickinson •KFYR-AM 550, Bismarck
 •KFAN-AM 1130, Twin Cities, Saturdays at 5 a.m.
 (Tape delay from previous week)

*Join Doug and guests for news and conversation that embraces
everyone with an interest in North Dakota's Outdoors.*



Warden Daryl Kleyer

WARDEN STORIES

Honest Officer, I'm Not Fishing!

By Daryl Kleyer

A couple of summers ago, I was patrolling with Mike Raasakka, district game

warden at Stanley, on the Van Hook Arm in the center portion of Lake Sakakawea, checking anglers and boaters. It was one of those beautiful, rare, windless, North Dakota days on the lake.

We motored from boat to boat, checking licenses of those who were fishing, and making sure each boat had the proper safety equipment on board. Not having enough life jackets is one of the more prominent Game and Fish violations and we are very diligent in enforcing it.

Prior to approaching each boat, it's common practice for us to look ahead with our binoculars to see who is fishing. In this particular case, we observed a man and a woman in the next boat, both holding fishing rods and acting like any other anglers.

When we were about 150 yards away the woman put her rod in a rod holder on the side of the boat and sat down in a seat. As we got closer the man began reeling up his line and put his rod in the boat, acknowledging us as we approached.

Before we even stopped, the gentleman started digging in his wallet and pulled out his fishing license. He looked up at me and said, "Here's my fishing license, but she isn't fishing, she doesn't have a fishing license."

"Oh," I said, "when we were approaching we were watching with the binoculars and she was holding a fishing pole, cranking on the reel as if she was fishing."

"Well," said the fisherman, "you can have two fishing poles here, can't you?"

"Yeah," I said, "that's true."

"Well, she was just holding my other pole for me," said the fisherman.

His last word was no more out of his mouth when a fish latched onto the

woman's bait. The rod bent over in the rod holder like it was about to snap. When the man looked over and saw the situation, he excitedly said to the woman: "Ooohh, you're getting a bite on your pole!"

The woman instinctively stood, turned, grabbed the fishing pole and set the hook on a nice walleye. Warden Raasakka and I looked at each other, somewhat in disbelief over what had just happened in front of us.

About five seconds later the man also realized what had just transpired. He turned to me kind of sheepishly and said, "She's not really fishing, she's just ..."

I then told him that it certainly looked like fishing to us, and that we would have to issue a citation to the woman for fishing without a license.

We all learn from experience, and game wardens learn very quickly that they better know who was fishing, whether on shore or from a boat, before they ever approach.

In all cases, when I find people fishing without a license, they just can't believe they could have bought a license for so little compared to the fine they have to pay after getting caught without.

(Resident individual licenses for those 16 and older are \$10; it's \$14 for a husband and wife license, and \$3 for someone age 65 and older. For nonresidents, it's \$15 for three days, \$20 for seven days, \$35 for an individual for a season, and \$45 for husband and wife.)

The standard fine for fishing without a license these days is \$350 when you include all the court costs. It's just a lot more fun fishing when you don't have to look over your shoulder all day to see if the game warden is coming your way.

DARYL KLEYER is the Department's warden supervisor for northwestern North Dakota.

Anglers Reminded of Bait Restrictions

Anglers who want to bring live bait into the state, including legal live baitfish such as fathead minnows, must obtain a valid North Dakota bait vendor's license. Otherwise, anglers must purchase all live bait in North Dakota.

The purpose of this four-year-old regulation, according to Emil Berard, fisheries biologist for the state Game and Fish Department, is to provide better control against unintentional introduction of aquatic nuisance species. "These species are becoming more of a threat," Berard said. "We are especially concerned about shipments of leeches, crawlers or live baitfish coming into North Dakota from points east and south of the state."

In the past, bait moved rather freely between states and provinces, Berard said, as there was little control. "However, it is now illegal for this indiscriminant movement of bait to occur," he said.

Nonresidents who want to bring live bait to North Dakota, or residents who want to buy live bait out-of-state and bring it back into North Dakota, need to buy a North Dakota bait vendor's license. Otherwise, anglers simply need to buy bait from a licensed North Dakota bait vendor.

Monitoring 250 bait vendors, Berard said, is much easier than making sure some 162,000 licensed anglers, including 34,000 nonresident anglers who fish in the state, possess legal bait that is free of exotic species such as zebra mussel.

In 2004, North Dakota bait volume exceeded 36 million units, including more than 8 million nightcrawlers, leeches and wax worms. All live insects and invertebrates brought into the state are illegal without the appropriate license or permit from the Game and Fish Department.



CRAIG BIERLE

Life Jacket Loan Kits Available to Recreation Areas

Lake recreation areas in North Dakota can take part in a program that promotes safety to water enthusiasts.

The program is geared for recreation areas to have life jackets available for boaters, anglers and jet skiers who have either forgotten, misplaced or just don't have enough life jackets along for an outing.

A life jacket loan kit will be sent to sites interested in the program. Each kit includes nine Type III personal flotation devices, consisting of three infant, three 30-50 pound and three 50-90 pound life jackets.

The package of loaner PFDs is free, and sites cannot charge to loan out the life jackets, said Marty Egeland, outreach biologist for the state Game and Fish Department, Grand Forks. Public and private entities can apply for the kits, which are for only lake and river areas, not swimming pools.

Recreation areas interested in becoming part of the program should contact Egeland at 795-3811.

Free Fishing Days June 3-4

Looking for a great family outing that is sure to put a smile on a youngsters face? Then you will want to mark June 3 and 4 on your calendar.

That is the weekend North Dakota residents may fish without a license. All other fishing regulations apply.

Refer to the 2006-08 North Dakota Fishing Guide for season information.

2005 Bighorn Sheep, Moose and Elk Harvests

North Dakota's bighorn sheep, moose and elk hunters had successful 2005 hunting seasons. Harvest statistics show overall hunter success was 100 percent for bighorn sheep, 90 percent for moose and 49 percent for elk.

Two bighorn sheep units were open in 2005. One license was issued south of Interstate 94 for Unit B1, two licenses were issued north of Interstate 94 in Unit B4, and one additional auction license holder was able to hunt both open areas. All four hunters tagged adult rams.

The Department issued 128 moose licenses last year. Of that total, 115 hunters were successful, harvesting 76 bulls and 39 cows/calves. Harvest for each unit follows:

Hunting Unit	Licenses Issued	Bulls	Cow/Calf
M1C	10	6	2
M4	15	8	5
M5	8	5	2
M6	15	14	1
M8	40	24	13
M9	20	11	6
M10	20	8	10

The Department issued 216 elk licenses last year. Of that total, 107 hunters were successful, harvesting 61 bulls and 46 cows/calves. Harvest for each unit follows:

Hunting Unit	Licenses Issued	Bulls	Cow/Calf
E1	40	0	12
E2	91	26	20
E3	20	17	0
E4	65	18	14

NORTH DAKOTA OUTDOORS ON TELEVISION

Your Weekly Window on the WILD

Bismarck	KFYR	Tuesday	10 pm
Bismarck	KXMB	Sunday	10 pm
Bismarck	CATV	Saturday	Noon
Dickinson	KQCD	Tuesday	*9 pm
Dickinson	KXMA	Sunday	*9 pm
Fargo	KVRR	Sunday	9 pm
Grand Forks	WDAZ	Wednesday	5 pm
Minot	KMOT	Tuesday	10 pm
Minot	KXMC	Monday	Noon
Williston	KUMV	Tuesday	10 pm
Williston	KXMD	Monday	Noon

*Mountain time